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UNITED NATIONS

8TH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF STATES PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

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>> So we have nine speakers on our list. I would like to ask everybody to be seated so we can start with the speeches of the general debate of the conference of the 8th session of the state parties to the convention of the rights of persons with disabilities. So I have first the representative of Venezuela and I would like to ask you if possible to limit your comments that has been agreed to three minutes so I give the floor to Venezuela. We are going to move on as the delegate is not in the room. Is it ‑‑ okay, we are going to move onto the representative of Bolivia. Okay. You have the floor, sir.
>> Thank you very much, president. We are very pleased to participate and we welcome the holding of this conference and would like to let you know in 2009 we ratified the convention and the protocol through a law state number 42. After the passage of 42 we have been able to pass a specific bill for people with disabilities in 2012 we had bill 22‑23 the purpose is to fulfill the rights of disabled people equal conditions and opportunities under a system which protects all those with disabilities. I should also mention that in 2012, we represented the first country report for the convention. In this context we have been working on public policy for people with disabilities. This document has eight axis of action. We have been able to incorporate ten ministers in Bolivia to this work and of course the organizations of people with disabilities along with access we have the issues of health. We have rehabilitation centers and free health insurance for those with disabilities. We also have solidarity income given on an annual basis. We are setting up a multisectorial comprehensive centers for different types of disabilities. A project for social education at home for those with disabilities who cannot attend class and also on the rural level. In terms of employment. 4% of the people with disabilities have been integrated into the work force and public institution and we also have social housing for people with disabilities. For progress and projects 40 million Bolivian funds have been directed for specific projects for training and awareness raising. And, finally, I should mention that we are implementing ‑‑ community‑based rehabilitation as a strategy as well as a plan for access to justice with a focus on inclusion on persons with disabilities. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I should include by indicating that if we can dream then we can achieve changes. Thank you.
>> (APPLAUSE).
>> I thank the distinguished representative of Bolivia for his statement. Since the representative of Venezuela has not joined us yet I'm going to give the floor now to the distinguished representative of Vanuatu.
>> We would like to join the other delegates to congratulate you. Please join me this moment to remember the lives that were lost during the recent category five that infestated the southern islands of Vanuatu. We became the first island country to ratify the persons with disabilities apart from Australia initially Mr. President, allow me to highlight for all that has take on the realize the articles. To follow up a disability policy in 2008 that supports the implementation of the articles in the U.N. CRPD. National disability committees and other national mechanisms have been established to monitor the implementation of the CRPD, the strategy, and the disability policy at a national provincial and community level. This mechanisms or established bodies are very instrumental in the promotion, protection, and implementation of these policies as well as other policies such as the inclusive education policy, the mental health policy and the inclusive policy on infrastructure and work. The CRPD compliance contacted in August of this year which will lead up to the enactment of disability specific legislation. The government acknowledged support from the Pacific island forum secretariat and NGOs and persons with disabilities who have supported the government serving it's obligation of the convention. For the initial report that is being finalized and should be submitted to the U.N. CRPD soon. We have a population of small people. 12% of the population have some disability. This was to questions that were integrated in census questions in 2009. In 2014 they contacted the survey and identified challenges and limitations which will be utilized to improve on a national disability survey. Also in 2014 UNICEF in collaboration with the statistics office contacted a disability monograph using data from census that DHS and disability policy survey. This report is being used by the policy implementation resource allocation and service delivery to communities so support men, women, and children with disabilities. We have a very active community based rehabilitation program which provides health, education, training, employment, and support for persons with disabilities. The government acknowledges support from the NHO and the CRPD program. This program currently utilizes the statistics from the disability pilot survey from its program activities. Article 7 allows state parties to raise awareness on the rights of disabilities. This campaign also supports article 11 of the convention on the situation of risks and humanitarian emergencies. The recent category seven has disabled all the programs and therefore the government welcomes partnership from U.N. agencies and countries to support these processes over the next two years. We see the challenges in this convention and therefore the government has shown its commitment to be echoed in the post‑2015 development agenda to ensure more recognition is offered to persons with disabilities to participate actively in a basis with others. Thank you, Mr. President.
>> I thank distinguished representative of Vanuatu for his statement. After the two countries state parties of the convention I ‑‑ we now are going to give the floor to three countries signatories so first Finland. You have the floor, madame. Please use the mic.
>> Mr. Chair, ladies and gentlemen, Finland aligns itself with the statement of the European Union. First of all, Finland would like to congratulate on her appointment as the special repertory on the rights of disabilities. We would like to acknowledge her expertise and her personal engagement in full feeling to mandate outstandingly, I am a member of the national council of disability in Finland I have a 17‑year‑old son with a disability. Thus, I am aware of the challenges that persons with disabilities might face. I am honored to give the national statement on behalf of Finland. Addressing three topics related to this session. Firstly, equality and nondiscrimination are the cornerstones of our human rights policy and development policy. Including post‑2015 development agenda. And the sustainable development goals. Exclusion of people from economic, political and social participation and this is in the making and to unequal access to services are often rude courses of conflict and civil unrest. It is of utmost importance that the human rights of the most vulnerable persons are insured and that multiple discrimination is systematically addressed in the global agenda. Secondly, education is crucial. It is a human right belonging equally to all. Accessible, affordable and high quality education is one of the key elements in our ‑‑ in empowering individuals. The promotion of inclusive education that ensures access also with the most. Including women and girls with disabilities. Is one of Finland's long‑term priorities. Education enables individuals to become active participants also in global development processes. Thirdly, appropriate and measurable indicators desegregated information and tools are part of our commitment to ensure the full enjoyment of human rights of persons with disabilities. These are tool to make exclusion visible. It is important to adopt indicators measuring existing inequality gaps as well as indicators that measure access to goal‑related services by populating groups. However, Finland analyzes the root causes and the dynamics of inequalities and poverty is needed. High level and independent research including disabled researchers, needs to be globally supported. Mr. Chair, before concluding, we would like to confirm that the ratification process of the convention in Finland is in its final stages. We aim at the depositing the ratification instrument by the end of the year as a high priority. Thank you.
>> (APPLAUSE).
>> I thank distinguished representative of Finland for her statement. We now have the ‑‑ his excellency the permanent representative of Antigua and Barbuda. Two other nations. I give you the floor.
>> Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Chairman, I would like to congratulate you and the bureau for conducting and leading this conference. Mr. Chairman, I will speak to my statement rather than present it in the interest of time. And I will have this statement placed on the appropriate website so that it's available. Antigua and Barbuda, Mr. Chairman, assigns high priority to the well‑being of persons with disability. Although slower than many of our colleagues and partner countries, we now have in place a law that protects the rights of persons with disabilities and we working and just about ready to ratify the convention and enjoying the world community in this process. But my country did not wait for this in order to give meaning to the rights of persons with disabilities exactly twelve months ago a new government came into office and immediately began to transform the landscape for persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities have now been appointed to many of the national boards, persons with disabilities are given opportunities to work in the government service and our government appointed the highest diplomat in our diplomatic corp as a persons with disabilities. This showing the government's commitment and intention to transform the landscape for persons with disabilities in our country. Despite this, however, the realities for many persons with disabilities in Antigua and Barbuda is that there is a lot of work to be done. Women and girls with disability continue to be amongst the most vulnerable. Youth with disability continues to struggle with education. Continues to struggle with employments. And accessibility for transportation and movement in urban and rural areas continue to be a challenge. My country, Mr. President ‑‑ Mr. Chairman, intends to work towards addressing these in several ways we recognize that persons with disability in moments of conflict, in moments of natural disasters, like hurricanes, etc., are very vulnerable. We recognize that we must address these within the coming year and within the context of the international movement that ‑‑ in which we are all engaged. We recognize, too, that countries like Antigua Barbuda, middle income countries that experience significant debt in our society where in many countries like hours almost 75 cents that go to pay debt is removing funds from this badly needed public service that will help us to address. We trust that in the upcoming discussions in the financing for development conference and in the conference ‑‑ the seminar conference in September that these are the issues of this nature would be brought to the table to help us address the questions of providing better service for persons with disabilities. We believe that the issues of disability in the discussions ahead within the United Nations deserve more than a line in a document, more than a simple statement in a document, more than a tag line to several other statements of vulnerability. We believe this must be given specific and direct attention within those documents. Mr. Chairman, before I end I want to point to the opportunity before us within our own house. We believe that in the United Nations, in our own house, we need to pay attention to things like information, access in meetings for persons with disabilities. Meetings where our representatives at times experience where he attends meetings and cannot get documentation in braille or electronic. We know we have spoken to the president and he is looking into this and we thank him for this publicly. We also bring to the attention other issues we know the master plan has already begun to address some but issues relating to persons with disabilities finding accessibility in bathrooms are issues that we have in our own house. We ought to pay attention and give some preference. Mr. President, Antigua Barbuda welcomes this opportunity. Welcomes the international focus and continues to pledge its relationship with the international community on changing what it means to have a disability in the world. I thank you.
>> (APPLAUSE).
>> I would like to thank the distinguished representative my colleague, Webson. You have raised important issues also for the daily work on the U.N. and I completely share your views on that. I am now going to give the floor to the democratic people's Republic of Korea.
>> To chair, distinguished delegates. It is an honor for me to represent the democratic people's Republic of Korea to the convention on the rights of persons with disabilities. The democratic people's Republic of Korea signed the convention on the persons with disabilities in 2013. The government has taken legal institutional measures to consistently respect dignity of persons with disabilities and to provide them with all conditions and circumstances so that they could enjoy equal social and political rights with the ordinary people and taking active part in social activities. This was adopted on June 18, 2003 and was amended in 2014 to promote all the rights and benefits for more stable and favorable life. Cultural ‑‑ central committee of the Korean federation for the protection of the disabled KFPD was founded in 1998 to help the government make and implement the policies and programs to protect persons with disabilities and to guide the activities in an integrated manner. The KFPD throughout the deaf, blind associations have others that dedicate to the health rehabilitation, social, cultural activities of the disabled persons. June 18th is set at the national day of persons with disabilities. To enhance the public awareness on the right of persons with disabilities. And concentrating on the issues of protecting and assisting them better. This was successfully conducted in March 2014 to assess the requirement in the field of rehabilitation, education, employment, cultural life. In my country the disabled persons get free medical care and health services in specific general hospitals, functional rehabilitation clinics and have slide assistive devices at the expense of the state. The disabled children started the school specific to their disability patterns and continue to study at college, university or occasional school according to their ability. They also take part in the sports and art useful for health, rehabilitation. In September 2011, the national paralympic was founded and in recent years they have disabled sport men and women have achieved brilliant success in London and other games. Korean federation for the protection of the disabled has signed MOAs with international federation of the disabled for exchange of good practices and cooperation. We have a lack of material resources and some difficulty in the work to implement the right but since they have the right to enjoy the human rights as members of our society and families, and the great potential of contributing to social development, the country will continue to pay them ‑‑ preferential attention with increased investment. My government programs to protect and implement their rights is based on the policy of human rights at various amounts and progresses. Believing that mainstreaming the rights of persons with disabilities in the post‑2015 development agenda is an imperative issue in social development. The government of the DPR Korea will make every effort to protect and implement the rights of persons with disabilities in the future too. Thank you, Mr. Chair.
>> (APPLAUSE).
>> Thank you Korea for your statement. We are now going to turn to the non‑governmental organizations. We have four inscribed on our list. I will now start by giving the floor to the World Blind Union.
>> Chair, your excellencies, friends, colleagues, first of all I would like to say thank you for letting me speak to this conference. World blind union is an organization of 285 million blind and partially sighted persons based in 190 different countries. It is important to be mentioned and I am glad that disability group is not left out in the draft zero. But it is even mentioned more often than in previous documents. I hope that disability group could also be mentioned when we are talking about the goal about reduction of poverty and health. It is also important to be visible when we are there and therefore the data must be desegregated so we are being more visible and also that we can measure how disabled persons will be reached in improvement of the situation for blind and partially sighted and other disability groups. Chair, as speaking for blind and partially sighted people all over the world I have to mention the importance of the so‑called Marrakesh Treaty. I will appeal to the states to ratify this treaty. The treaty has a clear linkage to the CRPD. And it's a way to open to get access to books over boarders and it's not just a question of braille books but we're also talking about how we can get accessible books for all persons who have any kind of print disability. My colleagues from Norway highlighted the importance of education and the need of strengthening and give education to blind and partially sighted people and others. The treaty is also about education because the treaty will open the schools and give materials, accessible materials, for children in school and higher education. There will be millions of print disabled persons who will get advantage and more access to school and education if the treaty is ratified in all the countries. Thank you, chair.
>> (APPLAUSE).
>> I thank you for your statement and I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of the European disability forum.
>> Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, excellencies, I will speak on behalf of the European disability forum. Who is the umbrella organization bringing together disabled people's organization in Europe and under European level. There's about 80 million people with disabilities in university. Our members are here in this conference to participate and to give our experiences to the development of the CRPD and we congratulate you on the your election. We look forward to strengthening the CRPD as members of the international disability alliance we ‑‑ and our members stand ready to collaborate on this conference in bringing this conference to its importance and because we think it is important that state parties and NGOs are meeting and exchanging experiences and collaborating on strengthening the CRPD. We would also like to recognize the importance of the themes taking up on this ‑‑ in this conference. 2015 is a very important year on bringing the CRPD together with the sustainable development goals. In the coming years we look forward to cooperate in doing this thing and these themes together and strengthening the CRPD. We think that it is important that statistics and data is made available because without statistics and data we have no way of finding out how this CRPD is work and how it is progressing and without progress for disabled people there's no better life for us. We look forward to collaborate with all parties present bringing the ‑‑ securing that the development will be accessible and inclusive. Thank you, chair.
>> I thank you. And now the organization of the Arab organization of disabled people.
>> Thank you, Mr. Chair. Your excellencies and colleague. At the time when we are sitting here discussing the latest development in the role towards the implementation of the CRPD thousand of people are turned disabled due to the continuing conflict and violence in the Middle East. The number of refugees in the region has reached a scale much beyond any world experience. Unfortunately, even after the ratification of the CRPD, the intervention of different U.N. agencies to meet the need and challenges coming from the miserable life condition of refugees in the region are still far from meeting the basic need of these people. The Arab organization of person with disabilities are present in 18 Arab countries. Call on your confidence to convey a strong reference for the national committee to intervene to, put an end to the madness that is taking place in the region. And to fulfill its commitment in the CRPD and different convention to meet the challenges of the need and the rise of individuals with disability with proper support and dignified conditions. However, even with all what is going on in many Arab countries, we did not lose track of looking ahead for the future. We highly appreciate that the world is coming to the new social development goals. And we are looking forward to working to be sure that no one is going to be left behind in any particular persons with disability. This is why AOPD with other disability organizations are representing different disabilities in the world. Because the effort made to include disability in different goals and the target of the SDGs it's on you to adapt indicators to include in disability especially related to poverty reduction, education, health, accessibility and employment. Thank you very much.
>> (APPLAUSE).
>> I thank you for your statement. We have now come to the conclusion of the debate. I don't see any other inscribed on my list. We are now going to stop here for to the general debate and turn to the second part of the program this morning which is the informal panel of addressing vulnerability and exclusion of people with disabilities. So to give the chance to the panelists to come to the day I will now interrupt the session for two minutes and then we start again. Thank you. I invite of course the panelists to join me.
>> (Break).
>> I think we are ready to start the informal panel. As I said before, addressing the vulnerability of exclusion of persons with disabilities. The situation of women and girls, children's right to education, disasters and humanitarian crisis so I would like to briefly present the panelists starting with my distinguished co‑chair on my left. I hope I pronounce it right. From Ethiopia. She's a cofounder and executive director for a center of disability and development. ECCD which promotes the inclusion of persons with disabilities in different development programs including economic empowerment. She also represents the NGO live for the world as a member of the international board of ambassadors. You lost your eyesight at five if I understand.
>> Confirmed.
>> She has an educational background and graduated from university and I will visit your beautiful city in mid July for the financing and development conference. So ‑‑ she's my co‑chair today and we're going to together conduct the business today. Then I'm going to present Ms. Rachel Kachaje you are deputy vice chairperson and then Dr. RANGITA. University of Pennsylvania law school Sri Lanka and United States. You are a deputy dean of law school of University of Pennsylvania and you were the inaugural director of the women in public service project WPSP and the global women's leadership initiative at the wood row Wilson international center for scholars in Washington D. C. We also have Ms. Diane Kingston. Committee for the convention of the rights of persons with disabilities from the UK. You are a UK‑based disability rights advocate and a member of the committee on the rights of persons with disabilities and you were madame deputy director in the alliance department at CBM, an international Christian development organization committed to improving the quality of life of people with disabilities in poor communities. And we have also of course my colleague, his excellency Ambassador Walton Alphonso Webson. Distinguish ‑‑ permanent represent of Antigua and Barbuda to the United Nations before being a representative here he had a long career with management with Perkins international and the council for the blind and you were also teacher at assumption college in the United States and you offered many books on empowering persons with disabilities and academic papers on development education of course aspects of disability. Last. Professor Mary Crock. University of Sydney, Australia. You are at the faculty of law and you are practicing lawyer. Running a pro bono practices. You have served on the expert advisory committee of the NSW commission for children and young persons and in executive position for the law council of Australia and the refugee council of Australia and worked as consultant to the human rights and equal opportunity commission I imagine in Australia also. So you have as we see a very important panel of distinguished experts on this theme of disability so we are going to ‑‑ I will start by giving ‑‑ well I hope it's a brief statement and then I will invite ambassador Walton first and the others to speak and since we have started late compared to what was our original program, the time allotted to the panelists was fifteen minutes I would ask everybody to limit yourself if possible to ten minutes. So, first, I will give a statement. So excellencies, distinguished colleagues, I welcome you again to the panel of addressing vulnerability and extrusion of those with disabilities situation of women and girls in particular. Children's, rights, education, disasters. According to the world report on disability, approximately one billion people, which is about 15% of the world population live with some form of disability and frequently encounter a myriad of physical and social obstacles. They lack the opportunities of the mainstream population and are usually among the most marginalized in society. Disabled people are not less than others. They are more, of course, more vulnerable this is why they deserve to enjoy the same rights as everybody else. Which is possible only if the institutional framework is sound and solid. Today we will focus on three different yet linked aspects of the issue of vulnerability. First, of course, is women. The persistence of certain cultural, legal, and institutional barriers makes women and girls with disability the victims of twofold discrimination. As women and as persons with disabilities of course. Much has been written on discrimination against women but very little has been done so far to deal adequately with the problem of disabled women. The few attempts made have been based on a mistaken approach that treats the acute problem of disability as a category of the general discourse on discrimination against women. But sex and disability are two separate factors that, when combined in the same person, usually reinforce each other and compound prejudices. The main question there is how we can overcome discrimination and exclusion. We should discuss on past experiences and best practices to move forward and to find out the remaining challenges. Which are not few. Our second point is on children. In the world, living with a disability at least one in ten are children. In other words an estimated 93‑150 million children live with some kind of disability. Children with disabilities are more likely to drop out of school than any other vulnerable group even in countries with high primary school enrollment rates. Poverty, malnutrition, poor health, illiteracy, no access to proper sanitation and no clean water assist in this. In many countries there is little relevant data to identify the number of disabled children and this applies not only to, you know, to list of developed countries it applies very much to rich countries as well. There are also no effective policies to address the needs and give them access to a quality education. And even when such policies are in place, there is a shortage of funding to build accessible buildings, train teachers in inclusive education which is one of the really challenges that we face and scale up successful local pilot program to the national level. Here I believe the key question we have to ask ourselves relates to education. It's a warning signal but also as a means of emancipation. We may discuss how to reduce the gap between children with and without disabilities and how we can address disability since the early childhood. A third point relates to risk and humanitarian emergencies. The CRPD pays particular attention to the situations and calls on state to undertake and I quote all necessary measures to ensure the protection and safety of persons with disabilities in situations of risk including situations of armed conflict, humanitarian emergencies and the occurrence of natural disasters. Several studies show that including the needs and voices of persons with disabilities at all stages of the disaster management process, and especially during planning and preparedness, can significantly reduce the vulnerability and increase the effectiveness of government response and recovery efforts so despite an increase in worldwide focus on disaster risk reduction as opposed to mere disaster response, however, many cities and related government agencies fail to adequately plan for or include persons with disabilities in that disaster management activities. This leads to sharp inequities in access to immediate response and in long‑term recovery resources in persons with disabilities prior to a disaster and those that acquire a disability as a result of the disaster. So the critical and all embracing question is the following we think how to contribute to build disability inclusive disaster. The risk resilience community. Let us also think about the terrible humanitarian emergency that Italy and other countries in the Mediterranean such as Greece, Malta, and Spain. Our experience at the present time receiving many thousands of people trying to reach the European shores in search for a better life. Also in this case, we should reflect upon the conditions of those migrants with disabilities that need more attention from our side. Excellencies, colleagues I believe we have now much food for thought or some food for thought and for brainstorming and I am sure that the panelists will add some fresh ideas. I want to make just two further points which in my opinion are the pillars on which to elaborate strategies. First any answer, any strategy is to be achieved through the constant activity involvement of the very persons with disabilities. Including the representative organizations for developing and implementing legislation and policies and in all the relevant decision‑making processes. This is, we think, a key element in achieving the goals of the CRPD. The second we have to reason having in mind the post‑2015 development agenda scenario which is where the rights of persons with disabilities are fully included. We contribute here the NDGs where the absence of disability represented very important missed opportunity. So I will limit myself to this comments. And I kindly ask you, as I said to be possibly concise instead of fifteen possibly ten minutes and respective format of the panel and with this in mind I have no doubt that we are going to have a most lively and interactive discussion. I now give the floor to the first panelist, which is his excellency the permanent representative of Antigua and Barbuda Walton Webson.
>> Thank you very much excellencies. Excellencies, members of the panel, ladies and gentlemen, friends, this is an important topic for which we are dealing with the largest minority in the world. The last world report as we have heard several times indicate 15% of the world's population are persons with disability. This cuts across this ‑‑ this minority cuts across all sectors of our society whether developed or developing countries. Whether rich or poor, male or female across all gender barriers, across all social barriers. This is the minority that affects all aspects of life in any community as you know it. In my part of the world we estimate in the Caribbean and Latin America that there are 12.5% of our population are persons with disabilities over 60 million people that is. This population is, and continues to be, the most vulnerable. This population is and continues to be amongst the most poor. Women with disability continues to experience the greatest vulnerability in our societies of exploitation, abuse, and so on. Very early in my own career I was involved in a review that looked at the state of persons with disabilities in the Caribbean and some of the horrific things we heard from people made you realize the state that woman with disability were faced with. Recently, in one of the islands in the Caribbean I visited a home and where a young woman with four kids with disability made me, again, realize the vulnerability of disability and the impact on the broader family. When I was given or asked to speak on this topic, I thought of not ‑‑ I thought of the risks that persons with disability are faced with. And I thought that one of the things we must make sure come to the table with the situation of persons with disabilities who are not always seen in the public or at events like these. Persons with mental health and the risk that persons and women especially and girls with mental health face in our societies. Persons with multiple disabilities, significant multiple disabilities. I have spent much of my career working with that population and have experience firsthand the risk and challenges that families face and these individuals face in a day‑to‑day survival. The risk is not only with disaster the risk for these families are the ‑‑ the disaster is the day‑to‑day life that they face. I was further awoken to the risk that persons with disabilities faced recently. I have spent the last several years of my career working through Africa and when the Ebola crisis broke out and when I learnt that ‑‑ and I was told in one country ‑‑ that you shouldn't touch anyone. That was one of the ways of dealing with the issue. Naturally you would recognize as I being blind I wondered immediately how persons with blindness felt in that environment. What was their state and situation? How did they mobilize themselves? How did they get around? What was the situation of persons who had problems with balance? And disabilities that didn't allow them the ability to communicate and/or move and I am sure that there were no planning made for those eventualities to deal with that group of persons with disabilities. It is important that we must recognize we can not say disability without recognizing that this is not a homogeneous group despite it is a minority group with certain characteristics that are similar. Each of us, as a person with a disability, firstly deals with disability by yourself and then within your larger community. Families and larger communities. But the risk that you face has to be addressed based on the disability you face and it is easy to forget the ones ‑‑ what I often called in my work in the past the voiceless. Persons who are blind can shout as they do often. Persons with other disabilities can make themselves known in different ways. Many, we have to remember, the majority of persons with disabilities, what I call a significant number in the voiceless. Children, we still speak of 90% of children with disabilities out of school and the large majority of those are kids with significant disabilities. Getting those people into the picture in terms of risk management is for us, most important. Urban societies, and rural communities, we ‑‑ remains a challenge in my part of the world. Transportation remains a challenge. In my country we are talking about putting together a transit ‑‑ a paratransit system that will allow persons with disabilities and their families to be able to move and enjoy the beauty of Antigua Barbuda in every way so you could go to the beach, so you could go to socialize, go to work, so you can go to the shop. This is 2015. So the infrastructure in our society is part of the limitation. My society faces hurricanes. Natural disaster of which we have no control. Generally, but which is part of the climate change experience that we all struggle with. The disaster preparedness programs we know are being addressed. And we are looking at the situation of safe housing and community movement. Again, the question of persons with disability A, being part of the planning and recognizing the broad need of the disabilities not just a few and, B, recognizing that in any plan ‑‑ disaster planning in any movement of people as people scramble for shelter and as people scramble for higher ground, how do we find, locate and identify persons with disabilities? The question of ‑‑ the question, therefore, it begs the question, therefore, for better data and statistics of persons with disabilities in the society where they are, who they are, and where and who ‑‑ with whom they live, etc. So the ‑‑ so, again, as we look at this opportunity in the post '15 era we must include in our data aggregation very separately, very specific information on persons with disabilities. Let me conclude by turning my attention to conflict areas an area for me that troubles me greatly. While my country does not have significant conflicts amongst society in general sense it ‑‑ the question has always bothered me about when we have significant movement of people through conflict, do we look for ‑‑ do we identify persons with disabilities? Are they the ones or I should say are we the ones left behind in the movement of people as we flee and, again, how much attention is being paid to this matter? As we move into this era in this very important era in the history of the world and the United Nations, I am ‑‑ this conference allows the opportunity for us to ensure that persons with disabilities are in a true way not left out. And this involves not just the mention of persons with disabilities in the broader group of vulnerability but that some specific attention be given to the issues of persons with disabilities within all areas of social movement and social development. And that our development programs pay specific attention to persons with disabilities and as we write the agenda to begin to measure how we will measure progress of the world, if we are truly addressing the question of hunger, of poverty, of conflict, of disaster. That disability be given not a line, not a few words, but some very specific, meaningful address within documents. I looked at the documents from before. Three important mentions of disability. Two with significant substance that addressed the matter. And I felt that we are making some movement. I would like to work ‑‑ like to see us work for more extensive involvement in the discussion of ‑‑ as we get to the national level, that the direction, as to how and some answers as to ‑‑ answers be given in terms of how we serve and reach. How we measure the progress of serving persons, the needs of persons with disability. Finally Mr. Chairman, excellency, I think the question of addressing within the context of disaster, it is very important that we have turned this conference to begin to bring the world's attention to the this matter of great importance and I appreciate very much my country does and the people in the Latin American areas with disability are looking forward to results of this. I heard this week young persons with disability asking for significant and real results from all of us sitting here and I look forward to be part of that process and to ensure that the world is watching, waiting and listening to us. Thank you very much.
>> Thank you very much I think you raised important issues disaster preparedness for disability. Disabled person is one of the main ‑‑ most difficult issues probably. The other thing is your reference to mental disability. I mean sometimes when you think about disability it's always about accessing building and get to work of course but mental disabled people are the weakest of the weak. That is something that we have to keep in mind when we address this very difficult issue. Okay, thank you ambassador and I will now give the floor to Rachel Kachaje and I understand you're going to focus on girls and women with disability. Your turn.
>> Thank you your excellency. I feel greatly honored to have this opportunity to address this important gathering to share more especially on the situation of women and girls with a disability. And how we feel that why is it that they are exclude? And in which way? As part of a discussion paper I feel that the plight of women and girls with disabilities is not the simple sum of the barriers that they face but also in particular emphasis on the barriers faced by women and girls with disabilities in general. It is rather a combination of their disability and their inferior status of women that goes beyond the mechanical doubling of discrimination to a situation of other social allied nation and policy neglect. Issues of women have been spoken and people have written and the researchers have researched over and over again on the situation of women and girls with disabilities. But, therefore, there's also a need not to repeat of the situation but I think ‑‑ the most important thing is to find a solution and the answers to the situation of exclusion. Why are women and girls with disabilities being excluded in all agendas? I was just reminded over a living condition survey that was done by the South African federation of the disabled in South Africa and this survey shows that levels of poverty is ways on women and girls with disability and this also implies that they are denied opportunities to participate or contribute to their society. And also it means that their level of poverty leaves them more vulnerability to exploitation, violence and abuse. As we people there the disability sector and as a woman with a disability we have come to realize that it is important that we need the desegregated data on specific situations in order to influence policy changes that will be inclusive of women and girls with a disability. We have also discovered that education is the most important aspect and that will change. The issue of exclusion. We feel that education is a master key for a girl/child and a woman with a disability. Because when she's educated a girl/child ‑‑ if she is not educated she will remain disempowered and she will not be able to deal with any challenges that she may face as she grows up. It is, unless when she is educated that she will be able to demand her right to fight for her right and to claim for her right. I just wanted to say in all these situations where we talk about the situation of women and girl/child with a disability, what is the solution that can make that girl/child to be included in all the development agendas in all the discussions that we have been having, in all the discussions that we meet here, year in and year out, when women, the commission on the status of women, they all discuss issues of women but where are the women with the disability and the girl/child? Do we have a voice for her when we meet her to discuss? You will find we have very important instruments where issues of women and girls with a disability are included but they are on paper only. They are of course where they speak about women and girls with disabilities but when it come to implementation and the involvement and participation where is that woman with the disability. Where is her voice so I was thinking that maybe the best way for us to include this woman is when we have the strategies in place for inclusion I was thinking if we could have twin track approach as a strategy to empower the girl/child with a disability by making sure she getting a much needed education, health care, social activities while the woman with the disability who has not had education to have the opportunity to have the education and be economically empowered I feel these initiatives will make and help that woman and girl/child to be a productive citizen in our various countries. The other strategy that I was looking at is the issue of mainstreaming disability. The best way to address exclusion I feel is to mainstream disability in all government line ministries. This will help to overcome barriers in society. Barriers like physical, accessibility, communication, negative mindset and attitudes and even legislations which will not leave anyone behind. We had here most ‑‑ many types people are saying leave no one behind. Yes, we are saying leave ‑‑ don't leave a woman and a girl child behind. We need you to take us along with you. In all the discussions. Let me just give you an example for what is happening in my own country in Malawi. We have ‑‑ we have developed a mainstreaming strategy which is a document that each line ministry they need to have because we feel if we just leave issues of disability to a particular ministry, you will find that we have been having challenges when you talk of issues of health, for example. They will say, no you got your on ministry let them address that issue but really is that true? That a ministry ‑‑ a particular ministry that deals with a disability can address issues of health. Why not health issues ‑‑ address issues of disability because that's their company. The issue of sports. The issues of all the things we are talking about so we are saying mainstreaming disability in all line ministries is very, very crucial and in Malawi we are in the process of doing that and we have already started because we feel when power is decentralized at the local level that's where things are happening and we have been training officers to make sure that they understand the disability and with that they should be part and parcel of development in the country. Let me also maybe conclude by saying that to share with you some recommendations that I feel will address the issue of exclusion, the first point I think most of the discussions that we've been talking about raising issues of the desegregated data I also want to say we need desegregated data on specific situations this affect women and girls with disabilities. And the second point is the principle of leave no one behind I want to emphasize to this to say do not leave women and girls with a disability as this will tackle the aspect of inequality across all goals. The other issue that I wanted to recommend is to have a deliberate effort to put in place in terms of funding women with disabilities organizations or more women to be attending these forums, for example, the commission on the status of women, the discussions that take place, the Beijing plus discussions, so that they make contributions and make an input with the discussions that take place. The slogan nothing about us without us. Why discuss situations of a woman and leave out the woman and the girl child out the door. We stay we want to be in and then create partnerships with organizations of women with disabilities. As this will advance the inclusion of women and girls with disabilities. In a ‑‑ all development processes and the issue of shorter term like funding partnership will always yield little regarding the capacity of person who have lived all her life excluded, segregated and subjected for their gender. Lastly, I was just thinking allowed to say to have the establishment of the U.N. agency like just the U.N. women I think we need it now and even as of yesterday. Thank you so much.
>> (APPLAUSE).
>> Thank you very much I think you have given a lot of food for thought a lot of passion of course and also power. Also I ‑‑ I retain the fact that when you talk about women with disability you are not only talking about one individual but women with children and the whole family so of course the issue is very much aggravated your idea of an agency is an interesting one. Why not pursuing it in some way? I thank you and I now give the floor away.
>> Distinguished chair, your excellencies, fellow panelists and friends. We come together at an inflection point in the history of the women's and children's rights movement globally. We meet at a point when we celebrate 20 years. The 20th anniversary of the platform of action and we are at the cusp of the sustainable development goals being announced. We are also celebrating the UNESCO declaration of 2015 which is a manifesto of education. And this is a call to action which should resonate with the post‑2015 development goals. The ancient declaration calls for a target that has an inclusive education and says no target should be considered met unless met by all and this is a rededication, a recommitment to inclusive education. Which makes a commitment to make changes in educational policies so that it focuses efforts on the most disadvantaged, especially those with disabilities. To ensure no one is left behind. To recall the words of my fellow panelists. I want to look at ways in which we can reimagine educational policies in the children with disabilities. And I want to take you on a journey examining some of the jurisprudence around the world that have been walked the CRPD and other conventions on the right to education. First of all, how is the right to education for children being defined? In its finest, noblest, broadest manifestation. In South Africa in 2010 in a case that challenged the educational policies in the province of the western cape the High Court, is South African High Court defined education not just in terms of map and language but in citizenship. In civic participation terms. And the High Court stated that advancing the rights of independence, social integration and participation is integral to education. And the citizenship rights that enabled advance by inclusive education is a value that must be embraced and celebrated by all by not just children with disabilities but it is an added value for all children in the classroom. Further, the High Court held that citizenship rights and educational rights read together embraces both positive and negative rights for children with disabilities. Because the deprivation of educational rights is a deprivation of positive rights and also the children's right to dignity and that is a violation of civil rights. A negative rights violation. Looking at a Colombian case in 2010, once again, the supreme court, the constitutional court of Colombia defined educational rights for children with disabilities in a way that it inextricably interlinks with other rights including the rights to health. And the supreme court held that these rights must be reviewed in the light of the CRPD, the constitutional guarantees as well as comparative laws, from around the world. And, finally, I want to take a moment to review a case in Spain which probably provides us one of the noblest ways to review the rights to education for children with disabilities. The supreme court in Spain stated clearly that the diversity of the needs of all learners through the increasing participation of diverse education is a way that provides enrichment rather than a problem. And to me, what that spells out is that inclusive education is a form of enrichment rather than a problem or a challenge and with that, I want to present a brief manifesto for the way forward. Marianne Wright the famous child rights advocates once told president Ronald Reagan told him women cannot be what women cannot see. Similarly unless children with disabilities see teachers and role models in the classroom, they cannot be. So it is important that educational leaders are persons with disabilities. So that we can reimagine the world in the terms of all people including people with disabilities. Secondly, it is important to seek children with disabilities as leaders. In the classroom and with that, I want to share with you an example in New Zealand where the ministry of youth development sponsors the youth parliament held every three years. And several of the youth members of parliament have a youth with disabilities. Third, it is important to address violence against women and girls. In schools, in universities, in vocational educational systems. And in travel to schools, universities, and vocational education as a severe impediment, severe challenge and barrier to education so I urge states parties to look at violence against women and children as a barrier to the advancement of inclusive education. Inclusive education has to be seen within a holistic framework of other intersecting rights such as the right to live free from violence and the right to live in human security. Education policy must also look at the intersections of the rights of children with disabilities as it was said before, there's no homogeneity of women with disabilities. Multiple grounds of discrimination often disempower children with disabilities including minority status. Indigenous status. Children living in rural areas so those data collection must also capture the reality of children with disabilities living within those multiple grounds of disabling conditions. Thirdly it is important to look at educational research with the lens of persons with disabilities to reimagine educational research the way we envision education for the 21st century. The way we reimagine and re‑envision education. Under the sustainable goals, development goals, must be done with the lenses of the child with disabilities and this should call for not just as it was said before, just rights on paper but complimentary budgetary allowances including cash transfers. As we all know conditional cash transfers have helped with the rights of the education. Those cash transfers can help to advance and enable children with disabilities and families of children with disabilities to advance this educational and technical training and this calls for cross governmental or intergovernmental initiatives that see this within a holistic framework of development and rights. And, finally, it is important to make the transition from education to employment. If education is to have its greatest impact we have to ensure that children and youth with disabilities make that transition from education to employment. And that cause was not just intergovernmental initiatives but public and private partnerships. That enable the smooth and effective transition of all children and youth with disabilities. As citizens not just locally, nationally, but globally. As contributing human beings who advance the global agenda on leadership and rights. Thank you.
>> (APPLAUSE).
>> Thank you, madame, I think you have presented a very important speech. Education, of course, is crucial because if our societies are not able to include from the start from the very first years of life of all our children the same people together then, you know, the transition from education to employment will never happen and it's really an issue which has not been resolved in many, many ‑‑ I think in most other countries so this is something that we have to work much more than before on because this is the first step of inclusion without that there would be no inclusion I think. Now I'm going to turnover to my co‑chair YETNEBERSH. I'm glad very much you are going to chair the next part of the panel and I give you the floor to introduce the next two speakers. Thank you.
>> Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chair. And I will ‑‑ it's a privilege for me to introduce the next panelists who will be giving us the remaining aspects of the discussion that we're holding. Sticking to the ten minutes fitting into the schedule, it's very important though to mention that all the previous three speakers have been dwelling on very important points of vulnerability seeing it from a very holistic approach like the ambassador did at first and women and girls with disabilities being another important focus I would still urge more openings and opportunities of working together should exist not to leave women and girls with disabilities. Even another point of heterogeneity being there on women and girls with disabilities. Those in institutions those with different conflicts and impairments and there are excellent ‑‑ very good practices that we can learn from each other in terms of those topics which I would urge you guy to visit that has been documented in terms of good practices on gender and disability. Without further ado I have the privilege of inviting Ms. Diane Kingston the vice chair of this year of this committee to give us tips for ten minutes on the concept of vulnerability which will help us to frame our discussions later on. Diane, please, the floor is yours.
>> Thank you so much for your kind introduction. With no disrespect to my fellow speakers I would like to talk about the concept of vulnerability. I am amongst friends here so I feel that I can have an open and honest conversation with you. We are now at the conference of states parties number eight. Repeat number eight. And we are still talking about persons with disabilities as weak. As frail. As dependent. If we are talking about persons with disabilities as vulnerable people or as a vulnerable group, this language predates the convention on the rights of persons with disabilities. It predates our thinking. It does not demonstrate the paradigm shift that we all need to make. Vulnerability is ambiguous. What do we actually mean? Are persons without disabilities shaping development in a paternalistic way? Are decision being made with persons with disabilities or for persons with disabilities. I think development discourse is confused between situations and people. So I'll talk briefly about the two scenarios. Firstly, of situations. If we talk about situations of vulnerability, we're talking about situations where we are in danger. Or at risk. Unprotected. Exposed, prone to, and affected by. The opposite of this is that we are well protected. We are resilient. We are immune to. We are talking about a level playing field between persons with disabilities and persons without. So let me take the situation of humanitarian action and emergency situations. We were in a vulnerable position when the earthquake struck. Yes, all people were in a vulnerable situation when the earthquake struck including persons with disabilities if disaster risk reduction and response mechanisms are in place for persons with disabilities, especially deaf people, they are not in a more vulnerable situation than persons without disabilities. Take the situation of women and girls with disabilities. Women with intellectual disabilities are in a vulnerable position because they are deprived of their legal capacity. However, article twelve of the convention, if this is upheld, and substituted decision‑making is replaced with supported decision‑making, they are treated equally. We can all find ourselves in a vulnerable situation. Or at risk. Irrespective of whether we are persons with disabilities or not. Just because we're persons with disabilities, it does not make us weak or a vulnerable person. So let me now talk about vulnerability in terms of the person. Let's move away from talking about persons with disabilities as dependent or frail. If you look in the dictionary and you look at the definition of a vulnerable person, the one that I found on Google said in need of special care or support because of age or disability. Weak. Helpless. Reliant. The opposite of this is strong, independent, safe, secure, empowered. So if we take the example of emergency situations, please don't ask how do we address the vulnerability or the weakness or the dependency of persons with disabilities in an emergency. Let's make that paradigm shift and talk about what reasonable accommodations needs to be in place for persons with disabilities as part of the risk response. In terms of women and girls with disabilities, please don't state that the vulnerability of women and girls with disabilities makes them more prone to sexual abuse or exploitation. Instead, let's make that paradigm shift and talk about appropriate safeguards put in place in all situations so that rights are upheld through strengthening policies and practice. Raising awareness. And training personnel at all levels of government. Please don't say our education programs are designed to give vulnerable children an opportunity to succeed. Let's make that shift for children so the construction of children as vulnerable does not exist when appropriate mechanism to address barrier to participation are put in place in the classroom, there the curricular and in teacher training. I'd now like to show you a very short video. It's less than three minutes and I'd like you to listen out for the term vulnerability or the lack of it. Thank you.
>> (APPLAUSE).
>> (Video).
>> Okay. We thank Diane for her really powerful presentation and especially leading us towards the paradigm shift over our language which had predated the convention and now how we should speak it was very interesting to hear about that Google dictionary of defining vulnerability and I think it's a common understanding that we can take from her eloquently stated position that there is a need for paradigm shift from a problem or from a vulnerability approach and that way we focus on the solutions and we frame, hammer our language towards the inclusion of those who are excluded. Of those who were told to be vulnerable so we thank Diane and I also want to make a point that the general comment on girls and women with disabilities is open for discussion. The draft general comments so I think it's at the end of July, Diane, that I urge people to look at it and make sure there is clear change of language from vulnerability to ability with appropriate mechanisms and now I pass it to professor Mary to share with us about the disaster and humanitarian situation which is another ‑‑ well, I can't change my language right now which is another point of vulnerability and maybe towards appropriate mechanisms so please professor Mary. The floor is yours.
>> Your excellencies I am greatly honored to have the opportunity to address you today. I also am going to speak about the protection of persons with disabilities in disaster situations. A topic that is vast and multidimensional. Disasters of course can be manmade, the product of armed conflicts, epidemics, transnational industrial disasters, they can be natural of a combination of both and we have heard today from many countries who have direct lived experiences of disasters. My experience in talking to you today comes from a six country study of refugees and displaced persons living in both urban settings that I have undertaken with my husband professor Ron M. And another colleague from the University of Sydney. And an assistant. Mrs. Laura Smith Khan who is also with us today. Our research involved interviews with over 1500 refugees and persons with disabilities in Uganda, Indonesia, Malaysia, we also did consultations and site visits in Jordan and Turkey and benefitted from a survey from nearly one million refugees in Pakistan. We were assisted by CRPD committee members from Uganda, Jordan, Turkey as well as many NGOs and IGOs. I want to talk to you about three aspects of natural disasters. The first is factual and I hear and I listen to what Diane has just told us. I do not want to take issue with what she has said but there's a factual aspect of disasters that does affect persons with disabilities in a particular way. It affects their enjoyment of human rights. I also want to talk about the legal dimension, I am a lawyer. I want to talk about the legal dimension of disasters, looking at the obligations that states have assumed to protect the persons who are affected. The third dimension that I want to address is operational. Looking at the role that human rights should play in shaping disaster management and response strategy. So let me say something about each of these. Natural disasters whether they are manmade or natural are not equal in their impact. They're very old. They're very young. They seek persons with disabilities, persons who are wounded, women, children, can face particular challenges so we saw, for example, in the earthquake and say nammy off the Pacific coast that killed fifteen thousand people in 2011 older persons were said to account for 65% of those injured. In 2004 there was a tsunami that killed many people. Four times more women than men killed. Children were one‑third of the fatalities but persons with disabilities were unable to escape the walls of water. And there were many more times likely to be killed or injured. We have seen the same thing in more recent conflicts in Syria, research by Handicap International and help age found that persons with disabilities were many more times likely to be injured to be denied access to food, income, access to shelter, basic health care and I'll go on. So the problem with disasters is that they both cause impairments but they also involve major disruption to societal structures and operations. And this can seriously affect the ability to respond to persons in need. Our research has confirmed that in virtually every situation where people are living through an emergency situation persons with disabilities face gaps in services. They are more likely to be left behind in evacuation exercises and to benefit from humanitarian assistance, access to medical services or assistive technologies. We also have to that I mean the elephant in the room. Cultural attitudes to disabilities can also produce adverse responses that range from discrimination in the allocation of scarce resources through the failure to acknowledge the very presence of persons with disabilities. In the six countries that we visited and studied we found discrimination and stigma were major issues. Whatever the cause women and children with disabilities can be exquisitely vulnerable to sexual violence, to forced marriage, to human trafficking and to other problems. So let's go to the revolution that has been cause ‑‑ that has been affected by the convention on the rights of persons with disabilities. In fact, I found in my research that international law has developed first in response to situations involving human conflict health disasters such as epidemics and transnational industrial accidents, the laws and practices to govern responses to national disasters however have been much more recent and less defined. We found, in fact, that international law per se has been very slow to respond to disaster situations. This is where the convention on the rights of persons with disabilities which took affect in 2008 is unique. Because it has created obligations that apply expressly for the first time to natural disasters and to manmade disasters and I'm going to put up article 11 which requires states parties to take all necessary measures to ensure the protection and safety of persons ‑‑ second slide. Of persons with disabilities in situations of risks including armed conflict and humanitarian emergencies and occurrence of natural disasters. This is the first, the first of the ten human rights instruments to mention natural disasters. It's the first and only of the human rights instruments that makes express your obligation to leave no person behind. The other ‑‑ the earlier human rights instruments actually make exceptions for natural disasters and allow state to suspend their obligations. I put to you that the CRPD is, in fact, a ‑‑ an international obligation in which ‑‑ for the first time states have actually created international binding obligations which I think are almost ‑‑ well they are taking us towards making the first steps to creating a multilateral agreement to make sure that persons with disabilities are not left behind, that for the first time that they are treated as rights bearing agents able to claim rights as active members of society. Importantly, however, the CRPD as Diane has reminded us is a product of society and environment as much as it is ‑‑ that acknowledges that what makes people disabled is not so much their impairment but our attitude to impairment and our willingness to make accommodation for the impairment. So, the significance of the CRPD as a game changer cannot be overstated or overemphasized it is the first legally binding instrument in an environment where it is proved extremely difficult to get state to commit to multilateral treatments. Now for us we have found that the critical issue in meeting needs in emergency situations is in the identification of disability. Too often we have found that governments and relief agencies adopt rigid medicalized approaches individuals are either identified on the basis of visible impairment or are expected to self identify. Our research has suggested that these methods mean that persons with less obvious impairments, even with vision and hearing impairments of mental illness can be missed. Poor identification means that the data on disability is often inconsistent, nonexistent and not sufficient. It is not the impairment that creates the disability but it's the failure to accommodate. The medical or charitable model presents challenges at two levels. First there's a tendency for agency to focus on obvious impairments or medical needs to the exclusion of other rights we found, for example, that children with disabilities typically are exclude from education. It's one of the first things to go. Refugee examples in Jordan and Turkey were the only places where we saw educational programs for children with disabilities. Of equal importance is the need to ensure that women and children with disabilities are protected from sexual violence and other exploitative treatment in Uganda an extraordinary number of women experienced sexual violence. Second there's a systemic failure to involve persons with disabilities in the design and delivery of relief programs. Nobody understands better the challenges faced than persons with a lived experience of disabilities hence the adage that we've heard several times today nothing about us without us. There's often a lack of sensitization amongst stuff in communities and this affects the way people are identified and assist that had may undermine their opportunity for meaningful participation. Let me conclude with some statements about the good practices and emerging trends that we have observed. State support for the CRPD revolution is strong and it's growing. The convention is being ratified at a faster rate than any human rights instrument. Newer agencies are following suit with the 2010 executive committee conclusion by the ‑‑ conclusion on working with persons with disabilities UNHCR has guidance documents for implementing the CRPD in the field. Over the three years in our project we saw changes in the disability and population of displaced persons. In Malaysia in 2012 for example a medical approach saw barely 202 persons with disabilities recognized out a population of 100,000 refugees registered with UNHRC. In comparison, a year or so late never Pakistan, the government and UNHCR adopted a CRPD compliant functionality approach to identifying disabilities when conducting a verification exercise with nearly a million Afghan refugees and had statistics much closer with the report. Jordan and Turkey stand out as notable examples of communities hosting overwhelming population of refugees and displaced persons that are making superhuman efforts to operate as good global citizens in the face of overwhelming challenges both are giving refugees access to health, rehabilitation, mainstream and specialized education facilities, assisting integration and participation to the very best of their abilities. We observed programs particularly in the camps, established for persons with disabilities and a willingness to make relief programs and refugee camps inclusive in their design and implementation. Uganda is another great country with. In reaction to past persecution of persons with disabilities they have designed to make the country more inclusive staff have benefitted from sensitization training and awareness raising by NGOs. Many countries we found are working to improve the physical accessibility of buildings, of providing sign language interpreters in emergency situations we just saw that in Nepal. In Malaysia, we saw provision of psychosocial services. In this country we saw refugees given assistance to self organize resulting in groups that have counseled and been consulted in researched and program design. Perhaps our most important finding is not enough is known about how persons with disabilities fair in emergency and displacement situations. Our research confirmed that these people do survive disasters and they do travel. We can ‑‑ they can tend to be invisible however because the methods that are being used to define disability are inconsistent and sometimes outdated the revolution wrought by article 11 of the CRPD is that in emergency situations, state parties have undertaken to treat persons with disabilities as full rights bearers. Not as objects of charity or simply as medical cases. For those who are interested reports can be accessed online. I put up a website right here. The good will and energy that we all see at this conference of states parties is for me, a beacon of help that in spite of enormous challenges that we face in the world today things can get better. Thank you, again, for the opportunity to address you. It has indeed been an honor and privilege.
>> (APPLAUSE).
>> We thank the professor for her important interventions in terms of sharing the major findings of the research that they have done on disaster disability mainly focusing on six countries and I think it's very timely as we hold this Conference of State Parties. There are still persons with disabilities suffering within the conflicts in Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Somalia, and those which I didn't name. We really share their pains of course of high magnitude in addition to the discrimination that they face. I think that this was a very interesting panel that we started by framing a general platform of understanding the pillars of vulnerability of those which were mentioned as voiceless by his excellency ambassador Webson and which also put us into the real note of leaving no one behind within the package of no one making sure that women and girls with disabilities are clearly included. And an idea of maybe thinking about a U.N. agency on disability. I don't know U.N. enabled or so. Which is equivalent to U women and also very important points made in terms of including children with disabilities which I would like to call to her saying that no goals of inclusive verification can be considered met unless all are met. So ‑‑ which is very strong and kind of demonstrating the real link of vulnerability towards the opportunity of education, employment that we see. I am a real advocate of inclusion as you know and I believe that education is one of the key passwords towards inclusion, especially, when it comes to women and girls with disabilities. And this is taken us also to excellently and eloquently stated points of paradigm shift in terms of addressing not why people with disabilities are vulnerable but the focus to be. Maybe ‑‑ this is very important especially as a co‑chair in civil society I would really urge all of us to start the action now here and now changing the language from vulnerability towards how we can address, how ‑‑ what are the appropriate mechanisms to take them out from their vulnerability package in that way we talk about empowerment. And lastly was disaster relief. I think this woman‑dominated panel has taken you so far except the two ambassadors who humbly join us. Now I will pass over the formalizations for question and answer from the floor encouraging again men and women, youth and adults with disabilities as we talk about the heterogenicity and I will pass to his excellency ambassador to take us through the remaining minutes. Thank you.
>> Thank you I think you summed it up much better. This was a very interesting panel and I thank you very much for your clarity and also for your, you know, the idea that ‑‑ you have the idea for clear as to what is to be done so it's important to reflect on what has been said and we pass from words to action. This is an issue we face everyday. It's a huge task but I think, you know, if there is enough political will it can be done I recognize already so the floor is already open for question and comments and I recognize already the delegate. I give you the floor.
>> We have now the delegate of South Africa.
>> Thank you very much and good morning once again. Pardon my voice, South Africa, it's winter. It's too hard. The body is fighting. But let me thank all the presenters. I just want to put ‑‑ my name is Henrietta. The deputy minister of social development. I want to add a lot of confusion for the speaker to all that they have said. Three things very briefly, the first one is I don't think as member states we've internalized or understood the impact of Ebola as an example. It could be any other disease. I'll use this one. As an example on people with disabilities. And I think the ambassador tried to paint the picture but being the chair of the ministerial committee of AU on health, population, and drugs I can share with you that the reality is the impact, the social impact not the health impact of Ebola is still not understood. And people with disabilities will require care. Who died not from Ebola but because all of a sudden there was no one to touch or wash them or tend them. It's that picture that we tried to paint but what is said as we discuss the issues is that none of us is actually beginning to consolidate and put some resources towards the issues of disability. When South Africa ‑‑ I will use Sierra Leone ‑‑ in government we needed to make sure that one ‑‑ that psychosocial program that includes disability, is built into our government's interventions and I think it's important that those that are tasked with the disability competent and those that are donors and fund some of these programs that the disability indicators should go beyond just being on paper. Because the mop up ‑‑ that must happen now whether it's in Liberia or Sierra Leone does not have the disability element in it and the impact and the stigma left by this disease it's really, really imaginable so I think we need to talk about it beyond that. The last point, chair, is as a woman with a disability and a mother of two disabled girls sometimes I think when we talk about women with disabilities, we really not bringing in number of aspects. I think that this is the third time that I'm at cusp and the issues of women and girls becomes like a formal session and then we talk. At some stage we need to come up with something because whether you talk about access to family planning, from reproductive rights and health, whether you talk about raising children with disabilities in terms of support, parents of children with disabilities health which we very little talk about. Whether you talk about strengthening the family. Whether you talk about preventing disabilities, I think some way we need to find where we pull it altogether because you can't talk about women with disabilities without economic empowerment. Without access to health care. Without strengthened families. Without access to assistive devices. And all of that would not be possible for them to even play the role of even being what we want them to be and the new proposed language of moving them from vulnerability so I think we need to add the Conference of State Parties maybe the next one, come up with proper resolutions but first ensure that the SDGs are responsive and can implementable. My apologies for being long thank you very much.
>> Thank you very much. Now the floor to Zimbabwe. You have to ‑‑ if you want to talk you have to bush your button on the mic and then you will be put on the list. Zimbabwe please.
>> Thank you for giving me the floor and thank you for the brilliant presentations. The issue of women and girls in disability is one that is sensitive. They suffer double discrimination. Part of the problem with the word disability is that it immediately suggests inability. If we ever wondered what people with disabilities think of us, who are perceived as able. That's food for thought. I am proposing that is we continue to brainstorm and craft policies, treaties, guidelines, let us think of retyping the resolving concept of what I would call ability so that we are glided on where we place the DIS or IN to create disability or inability. And even as we ponder over the issue of girls and women with disability who are the subject of this round table, may I beg the house to also come up with initiatives that will take care of the grassroots problems, the grassroot causes of that discrimination which I say it is double. There is double because they are female. It is double because they are disabled. For lack of a better word. That is my take on the platform. Thank you.
>> Now the floor to the representative of Pakistan.
>> Thank you ambassador. I am an intern for the Pakistan mission. I just wanted to thank everybody over here for working on this issue. I think it's an important issue. Being a person in a wheelchair myself I would like to thank especially Diane. We are not weak or vulnerable. I think that word needs to be changed. And I think that in order to do that, in order to change that word is disaster risk response needs to respond too I think we have made a lot of important changes but I think there's a lot of work that needs to be done. I also feel that we need to understand that point that it's not a privilege, it's a right. That's all I wanted to say. Thank you.
>> Thank you very much for your intervention. I now recognize the distinguished delegate of Japan. You have the floor, sir.
>> Thank you, chair. My name is JOON the chair on the commission of persons with disabilities which is an independent mechanism of Japan. First of all I fully agree that the concept of vulnerability should be redefined to meet the framework of CRPD namely social model and human rights model. Let me talk about a boy who survived the major earthquake and tsunami in Japan four years ago as he was autistic and he had a strong preference for particular kind of bread. However, people distributing food considered his request as selfish and unreasonable. Saying everybody had to be treated same. And refused his request. They didn't understand his disability. They didn't understand reasonable accommodation. That's why the act to eliminate discrimination against persons with disabilities was needed. This act defines that lack of reasonable accommodation as discrimination. Now I would like to talk about an experience of a girl with disabilities. Also a survivor. The girl had been going to local school in inclusive educational setting when major disaster struck her community. She had no problems fortunately, and the local evacuation center since her neighbors were familiar with her, unfortunately, her experiences were not typical. The experiences of this girl is a good example of inclusion in the community. Which proved helpful in the disaster. In Japan, we have been talking about the double fatality rate among the disabled community compared with that of all sufferers in that areas hit by the earthquake and tsunami to ‑‑ in 2011 but then we satisfied when that mortality rate is equalized between disabled and non‑disabled. By no means, we aspire to see no loss of human life disabled or non‑disabled. The visual provision of emergency information to deaf and hard of hearing persons certainly helps a lot in the entire community ensuring physical accessibility and making inclusive evacuation plans helps the entire community including blind people like myself. The framework for disaster risk reduction, the international guidelines adopted by the UN world conference last March clearly states the importance of the active participation of people with disabilities in disaster risk reduction policies. Which will lead to risk reduction of whole society. Thank you.
>> (APPLAUSE).
>> I thank you very much for your intervention. It's interesting to hear about some examples in the aftermath of the Fukushima earthquake. That was an interesting example you made today. And now the floor to the distinguished representative of Mexico.
>> Thank you very much co‑chairs. I would like to share some of the actions that the government of Mexico has taken in November 2010, an ad hoc group was set up to assure accommodations for people with disabilities in emergency situations. The draft official Mexican standard for care for people with disabilities in cases of emergency and disaster was drawn up. This is considered as prerequisite for proper civilian protection. Mexico has a program to respond to the needs of people in cases of emergency and and when it come to people with disabilities, this includes the opening of temporary shelters which must have a record of people in order to be able to determine the special health and nutrition needs for people with disabilities and other groups. When it come to food assistance in disaster and emergency situations, provision is made for the possibility that people with disabilities might be ‑‑ end up being separated from their families. Families ‑‑ other family members are normally responsible for the nutrition of people with disabilities and so physical access to food is insured for these people. One of the focuses of the program promoting inclusion and implementing safety measures for human settlements in risk areas although there are still challenges facing us the national program for the development and inclusion of people with disabilities provides for mechanisms, teams and civil safety protocols for the protection of people with disabilities. Thank you very much for your kind attention.
>> Thank you for your statement and now recognizing ‑‑ giving the floor to the representative of Australia. You have the floor, sir.
>> Thank you Mr. Chairman and madame co‑chair. Australia is committed to looking at multiple forms of discrimination that affect women, girls children with disabilities. Australian federal, state and territory laws deem it unlawful to discriminate against persons with disabilities and on the grounds of sex. The Australia government supports this having access to a strong voice and children with disabilities in Australia who are NGOs enabling civil society contributing to public policies affecting communities. Australia is also strongly committed to a significant and sustained issue of violence. We have a steadfast and ongoing commitment to be at the forefront of effort to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls particularly in the Indo‑Pacific region. We have set a target requiring at least 80% of its international aid program assessments regardless of objectives to address gender issues. The panel has identified many factors that increase children's vulnerability to exploitation and abuse including disability are often displaced homeless or abandoned. We are supporting innovative approaches. Mr. Chairman, madame co‑chair, international Australia is a strong advocate for protection in humanitarian action. We support the accountability to affected populations agenda. We've endorsed this framework for disaster risk reduction and furthermore we have actively advocated for a disability approach for the development of the framework and providing support for activities of the Women's Refugee Commission, the international committee of the Red Cross special fund for the disability and the protection ‑‑ standby capacity project and researching those with disabilities in camp situations. Australia's identified a number of challenges. What are your views on how we can better achieve greater disability inclusion at the world humanitarian summit. What do DPOs need to do? What do states parties need to do?
>> I thank you for your intervention. We will look over your question and we will have an opportunity with the panelists for some replies. Belgium, please.
>> Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wish to come back to this statements made by the first two presenters Madame. First to ask them first to ‑‑ ask for their apologies for not quite pronouncing their names correctly. I wish to thank you for having brought up and the simple statement that, for most of us, we are aware of how people with disabilities live. And, specifically, bringing up the fact that you brought up which is that in practice, for example, in Malawi as you brought up you spoke of the fact that in fact we see the area of disabilities being sent specifically to the specific ministries although there is a fact that disabilities must the issue of disabilities must be present in all ministries. This is an issue I believe that is not only existing in Malawi. This is one that exists in many countries whether African, Asian or European. This in my view is an extremely important element because if disability is present in all policies and all ministerial departments we will have the chance to see the disability dimension taken into account in a different way. Second point and here I speak about when she spoke about the issue of education, truly this is a crucial point. If there is a strengthening in the means, an investment in education for all children with disabilities, girls and boys then we will be on the eve of seeing men and women with disabilities capable of taking charge of their own lives and now, Mr. Chairman, I wish to speak to you because you began the debate by inviting us to go beyond the facts and move onto proposals and my question is, after this discussion, this debate, could this not be a strong recommendation to states parties here, those who are signatories and those who ratify the convention, calling upon them to implement disability and issues in all ministerial departments. Not ‑‑ ensuring that all departments integrate the issue of disability in their policies and reviews and secondly, to call for strengthening of the means dedicated to inclusive education. To ensure that this is put into place and I thank you.
>> Thank you very much for your proposals which I think many share I will now give floor to the distinguished representatives of Sierra Leone. I remind that we have nearly a half an hour and we have four or five speakers and then probably some replies from the chair ‑‑ table.
>> Thank you Mr. Chair and madame co‑chair. I would just like to give for the insight on the decision of the disabled especially as Sierra Leone is trying to get to zero on the Ebola virus and how its affected the disabled and I have the chairman of the national commission for persons with disability in Sierra Leone who is responsible for the day‑to‑day monitoring of disability. And the here he is now Mr. Freddie Kamal will give you a brief analysis of what needs to be done with Ebola.
>> Thank you Mr. Minister, thank you Mr. Chairman and madame co‑chair. As the honorable minister just mentioned I am in charge ‑‑ I am chairman of the national commission for persons with disability and that means having to deal with all disability issues in Sierra Leone however I want to first of all refer to the comments made by the representative from South Africa it was very pertinent to the kind of situation we've been faced with in Sierra Leone and I want to relate that to the question of vulnerability. One of the panelists really said she didn't think vulnerability should be equated with disability. While I tend to agree with that to some extent yet given the kind of situation persons with disabilities often face in terms of having the ‑‑ more adverse impact from anything that happens like, for instance, with the question of Ebola in Sierra Leone, when you think ability the possibility of persons with disabilities having the possibility of being impacted by Ebola more adversely because of the fact that Ebola is a disease ‑‑ a venereal disease that says people should not touch and when you think of persons ‑‑ people who are blind or visually impaired who need to often touch not only people who guide them around but there's a possibility of them coming into contact with anyone in the community so that's a way of becoming vulnerable. I think we can understand it from that perspective that vulnerability does not necessarily mean people ‑‑ persons with disabilities are weak. But it's ‑‑ the potential for them to come into contact with a situation that persons ‑‑ I mean with ‑‑ persons who are not disabled can avoid. I think that's the perspective from which I understand vulnerability and the question about vulnerability I think that is not correct. This is one thing that we always emphasize in Sierra Leone is that disability is not an ability but the problem is that persons with disability are very liable, you know, they can easily fall victim to certain events and certain things that non‑disabled persons may not fall victim to. So I think it's on that basis that we believe Sierra Leone for instance would not like to say that persons with disabilities are not vulnerable. I mean, we believe that they can be vulnerable under those circumstances. But when it comes to protection, I think mechanisms are being put in place to protect the rights and the privileges of persons with disabilities in Sierra Leone and that is encapsulated in the persons with disabilities Act that was enacted in 2011 and which lead of the establishment of the national commission. So things have been put in place to ensure that the question of vulnerability is mitigated and the question of person's rights including persons with disabilities including women and children with disabilities are addressed. Thank you.
>> I thank you for your intervention. We still have four speakers so I would like to ask everybody to limit themselves to a couple of minutes if possible. I see now the representative of Liberia. Thank you Mr. Chair and also thanks to the panelists. As I sat and listened I came to a point as you understand as a person, especially as a female with disabilities. There are many issues that affect us especially as women and I want to say hats off to Rachel. I believe that you have captured a lot of issues around the concerns with women with disabilities. However I think there should be a lot of emphasis on the issue of empowerment. Not only economic empowerment but they need to be empowered in its holistic term. Also considering all of the issues raised by the panelists, my greatest concern now has to look at the integral aspect which is the recognition of a person's life and once you are recognized as a person and not as a person just a situation that surrounds you there's a lot more we can do. As the government and the U.N. try to bring into being a lot of issues. Last of all I think also thanks to the panelists who spoke of the issue of the 8th section and made a lot of emphasis on it. Why are we and why should we continue to discuss and discuss when there are a lot of issues we have already brought to the forefront I think governments should also be able to make more stronger commitments to all of these information that are coming forth and I'll tell you in the next few months or years we will not be sitting again at the section discussing issues but we will be discussing and celebrating those successes that have been achieved. Thank you.
>> Before the last three speakers I would like to give the floor to the secretariat.
>> Thank you very much. I have an urgent announcement. An envelope was found on the table containing money and receipts. And please actually go to the conference officer in the back of this conference room and ‑‑ as soon as possible if you have lost an envelope with money. Thank you.
>> Thank you and now the floor to the distinguished representative of Namibia.
>> Thank you very much, chair. For giving me the floor and allow me to first of all thank the panelist for their insightful presentation. My name is Alexia. Deputy minister in the office of the president and the office of the vice president responsible for issues of disability. I would just like to thank the panelists for their insightful presentation and I would like to also share the strides that Namibia have gone through in implementation on the rights of persons with disabilities. One of the strides is that the president have appointed a deputy minister in his office and with the vice president and in regard to article eleven the risk and humanitarian emergencies. The national policy for disaster risk management in Namibia speak to the issue of vulnerability which is inclusive to people with disabilities. Although when we go back we are also going to ‑‑ work on the changes of the vulnerability. And similarly, the ministry of education in and arts and culture has recently launched a Namibia school manual on emergency preparedness and response and special protection is put on children with disabilities. And other vulnerable groups. So that lead me to a question to the panelist that perhaps they can assist us in how we would measure the ‑‑ adequately to make sure that people with disabilities in general and in particular a girl and a boy child is included in science and technologies at universities. Without any prejudices or any being patronized in one way or another. Thank you very much.
>> Thank you very much and India. You have the floor, sir.
>> Thank you, chair, and for those wonderful presentations. I feel we have to move from sentiment to action so I would like to stress three points. One is a compilation of best practices we heard from Malawi. Can we have a compilation of best practices to give us a flavor of how to do it in our own countries. Secondly I want to link to it the indicators we talked about yet so that also how can points which have been discussed can be linked to indicators which will be fixed shortly and finally, actionable points I would request each of the experts to give us one actionable point for our guidance today. Thank you.
>> I thank you also for the shortness of your intervention. Thanks the last speaker is Iran.
>> At the outset I would like to thank you, Mr. Chair but on the threshold of the 21st century the world's left behind the persons with disabilities in crafting the MDGs. Thankfully we are happy now the persons with disabilities are included in the post‑2015 development agenda but we are still concerned about the subgroups. Namely neurological disabilities. Especially persons on the autism spectrum disorder are left behind in the implementation of the ultimate goals and targets so we want to know how can we make sure that all these subgroups are included and, you know, how can we really make sure that nobody really is left behind?
>> Okay. Thank you very much. That was the last speaker from the floor so there were a couple of questions, a couple of comments that merits a reply from the chair's table. I would like to ‑‑ we have roughly fifteen minutes I would like to give the opportunity to each panel to say very few words, you know, at the closing of the session and then I will wrap up and maybe my co‑chair would also like to say something and give you some information so I will start maybe I started from the right before I will start from my left.
>> Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to make five very quick points about what we can do to ‑‑ what states can do to move forward. If we're going to be serious that states need to dedicate targeted funding for disability issues. For me, one of the really big issues however was data collection and I think if we could get the states to endorse the Washington Group functionality approach to disability that would be a major step forward. I won't go into what that means. Then, in relation to the designated fund create program to empower persons with disability to organize so that they can actually speak and put the issues first ‑‑ forward for all of us. There follows then the need for better training within government agencies, NGOs and INGOs and I completely endorse the last comments about the sharing of best practice between the states. If we can find a way to collect best practice and to share that would be excellent. Thank you, sir.
>> Thank you, and we pass it to Diane getting her last word.
>> Thank you so much. So action points number one, have a look at the office of the high commissioner for human rights website and find the general comment on women and girls with disabilities in its final draft from the CRPD committee and provide your feedback especially in relation to India. That would be great if you could do that in relation to harmful practices along gender lines. For the SDGs we need to explicitly name persons with disabilities all persons with disabilities and ensure that there is also the language of human rights within the SDGs. And my last point was on the world humanitarian summit. Point made by Australia. DPOs work with DPOs and states together to provide good examples of existing practice on humanitarianism. That's inclusive. The CRPD committee will issue a statement on the royalty humanitarian summit and crucially include indigenous persons with disabilities. Thank you.
>> Thank you Diane and we will proceed to the last words.
>> Thank you, chair, for letting us distill our final comments. As for a call to action I think India had asked us to come up with one call to action that could be used to implement some of our recommendations. I would like to echo and repeat what I had said earlier that no indicator or target should be considered met unless met by all. Especially in the education arena. Education as I had emphasized earlier is not just a fundamental human right but a foundational human rights guarantee for which many of the other rights flow and emanate. I would also like to take a moment to respond to some of the issues raised as to language and I want to emphasize that language has no innocence and therefore, it is important to get the language right as was earlier article related. And there has been a paradigm shift characterized by the CPRD and it has embraced disabilities and persons with disabilities as subjects with rights rather than objects of protection so it is important for us to embrace that. That paradigm shift rather than the term vulnerability but in order to give some clarity to this rather convoluted issue, what I would like to do is to borrow some examples of good practices from the women's rights articulation of this issue and there too historically there was problems. There were problems with the term vulnerability and instead what the women's rights community and movement came up was is the importance of equalizing the playing field and addressing the legacy of discrimination that called for temporary special measures so that women could then start on an equal footing with men. So, therefore, I think rather than the term vulnerability what should be used is substantive equality and substantive equality for persons with disabilities and women and girls with disabilities calls for temporary special measures and that has got nothing to do with vulnerability it is about equalizing the playing field. It is about equal rights and nondiscrimination and antidiscrimination for all.
>> Thank you. Thank you and now I give the floor for the number of points being raised but for the sake of time I would still urge you to be as brief as possible.
>> Thank you so much I want to emphasize the point I made on the disability in all government ministries. I think that is the starting point because each ministry will have their own way of addressing issues pertaining to people with disabilities so as I was saying in Malawi we have already started coming up with the disability mainstreaming strategy and the starting point of that to make sure it works. They have developed a committee chaired by the chief secretary in the office of the president and the cabinet and all principle secretaries in the different line ministries are members of these committee. It is called national committee on disability issues. So it means that each line ministry we have issues to address of issues of disability. So we feel that's the way to go to address these issues for inclusion and ‑‑ I think those ‑‑ I call only ‑‑ impression to say how basic we include some people in the summit. I think that's the best way to go. If you start including people with a disability from scratch I think it will be easy. No one will be left behind. So I just ‑‑ I call upon you to say no one should be left behind when we are dealing with issues of development or empowerment of people with disabilities. More in particular, women and girls with disabilities. Thank you.
>> Thank you Rachel. Still carrying the spirit of leaving no one behind. I will give the floor to Webson to give his last words.
>> Thank you to both you madame co‑chair and his excellency for leading the session that I thought some excellent points and questions came out of the session and I think we could take it forward. Just a few points I agree and endorse the concept put forward by the panelist from the University of Pennsylvania with regards to language and vulnerability. I think there need to be though a lot more discussion on that whole concept of vulnerability to be very clear as was raised by the representative from I think Sierra Leone that we do not ‑‑ those of us who are so‑called disable capable do not think of ourselves but think of the majority and frame the language to represent the majority. It's a difficult juggle of course in democracy but we have to look at that and I think ‑‑ I do agree language though makes a difference. In going forward in that madame chair, I think ‑‑ you know, I am advised that at this entire cost there were 17 ministers type level personnel from countries around the world present. I think if we are going to change maybe next year, maybe those of us here should put a little bit more pressure on our capitol to have a lot more ministerial representation so when I look at the gender meeting a few weeks ago there were dozens of ministers. If we are going to take the disability issue truly serious, we must get the highest level involvement all the time. So I want to recommend that from the colleague of India as a way of going forward. Similarly I want to within the language of the United Nations documents the SDGs, documents the FFD documents there were some more documents I did some quick research object how many times disability was mentioned and how many times meaningfully and I would like to see us as we go forward to shape those documents in the fall and the FFD shortly that there be some more substance around disability in each of those documents if, again, we are going to make the change and, finally, within our own house in the U.N., I am ‑‑ I am working hopefully with PRs that we can put together a group of us here who can work with capitols in bringing about some of the changes to see action as well. How much difference we will make with our ministers interacting with the dozens of us disabled people who are at this forum. Thank you.
>> Thank you ambassador Webson. It is been really wonderful to hear the reflection of the panelists as well as the participants. It made it really beautiful I want to add one point in terms of sharing practices I was talking about making it work that was on the CRPD. It's WWW.make it work CRPD.ORG. It contains works from Israel, Kenya, Guatemala, Canada and more. I cannot mention it all. This will take us maybe to a very important addition by the world disability forum which will be followed by his excellency chair of the station. The floor is yours for a few minutes. Thanks.
>> Disability union? Ask for the floor? No. Very brief statement if you want. Can you ‑‑
>> Thank you Mr. Chair.
>> Okay.
>> Excellencies, distinguished colleagues, ladies and gentlemen, it's an honor for me to deliver this closing statement on behalf of the interagency support group for the convention on the rights of persons with disabilities. The IASG. The IASG is a strategic coordinating body composed of 30 U.N. system organizations committed to supporting the implementation of the convention on the rights of persons with disabilities. And the economic and social commission for western Asia has the honor to chair this group this year. Ladies and gentlemen, the global community is facing an an increasing number of humanitarian crisis and natural disasters leading to unprecedented levels of humanitarian needs. These have a significant impact on persons with disabilities as we heard through the panel from the discussion today. We therefore welcome the theme of this panel which focused on the most marginalized groups of persons with disabilities. The convention on the rights of persons with disabilities as we heard today as well is one of only two core human rights treaties that contain a specific provision on humanitarian emergencies in article eleven. This constitutes visible progress in the development of international frameworks for the empowerment of persons with disabilities in humanitarian crisis. However, further efforts are needed to streamline the rights of enshrined this the convention into practice that persons with disabilities are fully include as both agents and beneficiaries of emergencies and relief efforts. Delegates we need to strengthen the desegregated data collection and needs assessments include agenda perspective before, during, and after crisis strikes. Only then we can have an accurate understanding of the number of persons with disabilities affected and deprived from the human rights. It is also crucial to incorporate accessibility standards and universal design principles. This extends to recover and reconstruction efforts, humanitarian and development actors should not invest in building new barriers we should build back better. Most importantly, affected populations must be at the center of any humanitarian and emergency response. Given disabling effects of disasters we must ensure the meaningful participation including women and girls with disabilities and the participation and the monitoring of action by addressing participation barriers and establishing effective mechanisms for consultation and coordination. An important milestone in this regard is the third world conference on disaster risk reduction held in Sendai in March this year the outcome of the meeting reflects a number of key points including the recognition of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations as both resources and agents of change in disaster preparedness. It also underlines the need to ensure all society engagement in partnership and disaster risk reduction efforts as a next step member states should ensure that indicators negotiated under this framework are disability inclusive so as to promote necessary action at the national and subnational levels. Chairperson, the ISG has put the issue of persons with disabilities in emergencies at the core of its collective agenda. Various agencies in full cooperation with civil society organizations have been working to protect and promote the human rights of persons with disabilities in situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies. This has taken place through advocacy research and guidance. We are working closely together with persons with disabilities and their representative organizations to ensure that their voices are properly heard and considered in all related U.N. processes. The ISGA is also creating a repository of available resources and information related to persons with disabilities in situations of risk. These will be made available on the U.N. enable website and on the websites of individual U.N. agencies. Ladies and gentlemen, the challenge facing persons with disabilities in situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies are significant and complex. But there are also significant opportunities for the international community to bolster the participation and protection of persons with disabilities in humanitarian crisis. In particular, the upcoming world humanitarian summit which will take place in 2016 will be an important opportunity to close existing gaps regarding persons with disabilities and to ensure that humanitarian response are truly inclusive. We encourage state party to the convention to lead the process and to enhance participatory ‑‑
>> I think we have to conclude your statement now. Can you conclude? Madame, can you conclude your speech? It's already after time and I think you heard the speech should have been given before. At the end of the panel I think. Actually. In any case I will give a very few remarks. First of all I would like to thank all the participants and the panelists and all the ideas from the floor. We hope it's been an interesting panel for everybody so as to give a contribution to the convention and to the high level to the advancement of course of the rights of person with disabilities. So we have of course very few points. Disability person are still invisible. This is clear. They are still at home a long way to go. Women and children face the biggest discrimination and the disability are a double problem for most of the time for many, many people. The concerned findings from women with disabilities were presented which indicate disproportionate disadvantaged experienced by women and girls with disabilities and we need, you know, there is an urgent need for empowerment. Education has been treated very much. This is really the key for inclusion. If you don't find ‑‑ if we don't find a way member states have any way to keep the education inclusive. Inclusiveness will not happen afterwards: It must happen from the start. Participation is also clear. It is been discussed very much. The way that people with disabilities can bring their own voice to try to find the right solution with their contributions is very important. And a lot have been talked about examples from the disaster risk reduction issues that can benefit for our ‑‑ for the development of common policies and common good practices in this field. I would like to thank everybody. This has been a very interesting panel. It's a small contribution to a very important issue. Thank you to everybody. Thank you.
>> (APPLAUSE).